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SIPDIS

C O R E C T E D C O P Y - TEXT THROUGHOUT

DEPARTMENT FOR SCA/FO, SCA/A, EB/TRA
NSC FOR AHARRIMAN, AMEND
CJTF-76 FOR POLAD, CENTCOM FOR CG CFC-A
TREASURY FOR PARAMESWARAN
COMMERCE FOR AADLER
TRANSPORTATION FOR MODESITT

SENSITIVE
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E.O.12958: N/A
TAGS: [ECON](#) [EAID](#) [ELTN](#) [AF](#)
SUBJECT: OPTIONS FOR US ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
ASSISTANCE ON JAPANESE PORTION OF RING ROAD

REF: A) KABUL 0379, (B) TOKYO 2570

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Summary

¶1. (SBU) Officials from the Japanese Embassy in Kabul are anxious to restart work on their portion of the Ring Road between Kandahar and Herat as soon as possible. The Japanese Government is considering all options, including recontracting the work to a non-Japanese contractor. The US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) offered to assist as a construction agent for the Japanese government, keeping the focus clearly on the Japanese assistance to Afghanistan and not on USACE's role in the project. Japanese Embassy officials were interested in the offer, but noted that Tokyo would make the final decision.
End Summary.

Japanese Considering Three Options

¶2. (SBU) On May 18, Japanese Embassy officials discussed options for resuming work on their portion of the Ring Road between Kandahar and Herat with Embassy, AID, CFC-A and USACE officials. DCM Moto Kato, Japan International Cooperation System (JICS) Representative Toru Takagi, and Defense Attaché LTC Hiroshi Shimohata attended for the Japanese. Kato noted that the project is a commitment between JICS and the Afghan Ministry of Public Works (MPW). Two Japanese companies subcontract the work from JICS, one for consulting (design) and the other for

construction. Kato stated that the Japanese were very anxious to move the project forward and that Tokyo is currently considering three options.

- First option: Find a way to continue road work with the two contractors already engaged.
- Second option: Keep the Japanese consulting company, but hire another (non-Japanese) company for the construction.
- Third option: Hire outside companies for both aspects of the project.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Proposes Solutions

¶3. (SBU) USACE described how they could assist as a construction agent for the Japanese government, keeping the focus clearly on the Japanese assistance to Afghanistan and not on USACE's role in the project. USACE noted that they could handle the entire project, including contracting the work and providing program management and quality control services. This would be the ideal and most efficient method for the Corps, plus it would ensure security was an inherent part of the contract work from the construction camps outward. Alternatively, USACE could play a more limited role, for instance providing program management for JICS' existing construction contract. USACE emphasized that security services should be included in the construction contract(s), but noted that USACE can play a crucial role by ensuring that contractors live up to their security commitments and by liaising with the local PRTs and local Afghan National Army and Police units to let them know that they are working in their region. USACE emphasized that they were achieving success on other road projects in Afghanistan by hiring local firms, and suggested this may be a viable course of action for whomever executed the work.

¶4. (SBU) Kato asked if USACE could provide security services only. USACE responded that they can provide security advisory services, but that they do not provide protective services. USACE noted that their program management services include evaluating and monitoring contractor-provided security to meet USACE standards, and that this would provide more security than simply engaging USACE in an advisory role. USACE stressed that no US soldiers would be available for assignment as security to this project in any scenario. USACE noted that if they let out a new contract for road segment, work could begin as early as mid-August. If USACE were to provide project management services for the existing construction contract, the timetable for restarting construction would largely depend on the existing contractor.

¶5. (SBU) Kato was appreciative of USACE's willingness to take on the project and committed to pass this information back to Tokyo. USACE, in turn, agreed to provide a written proposal to the Japanese Embassy

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outlining how USACE could work with JICS.

¶6. (SBU) Comment: The Japanese are fully aware of the strategic importance of moving forward quickly on the Kandahar-Herat road (despite the fact they halted further work on the project last February) and are also anxious to keep a Japanese face on the project. The Japanese were pleased with USACE's assurances that their involvement would be transparent, keeping the focus on Japanese assistance. The Japanese Embassy made it clear that the final decision would be made in Tokyo. End comment.

NORLAND